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[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/68/L.27 and Add.1)*]

68/103. International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, the annex to which contains the guiding principles for the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system, as well as all its resolutions on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development, and recalling the resolutions of the humanitarian segments of the substantive sessions of the Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming also the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence for the provision of humanitarian assistance,

Reaffirming further the Hyogo Declaration,[1] the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters[2] and the common statement of the special session on the Indian Ocean disaster: risk reduction for a safer future,[3] as adopted by the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, from 18 to 22 January 2005, and bearing in mind that the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action is coming to an end in 2015,

Taking note with appreciation of the results of the midterm review of the Hyogo Framework for Action, and noting the results of the fourth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Geneva from 19 to 23 May 2013, and recognizing it as the main forum at the global level for strategic advice coordination and partnership development for disaster risk reduction,

Recognizing that the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will be held in Sendai, Japan, from 14 to 18 March 2015, to review the implementation

[1] A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolution 1.

[2] Ibid., resolution 2.

[3] A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, annex II.

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of the Hyogo Framework for Action and to adopt a framework for disaster risk reduction beyond 2015,

Emphasizing the fundamentally civilian character of humanitarian assistance,

Emphasizing also that the affected State has the primary responsibility in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory and in the facilitation of the work of humanitarian organizations in mitigating the consequences of natural disasters,

Emphasizing further the primary responsibility of each State to undertake disaster risk reduction, including through the implementation of and follow-up to the Hyogo Framework for Action, as well as response and early recovery efforts, in order to minimize the impact of natural disasters, while recognizing the importance of international cooperation in support of the efforts of affected countries which may have limited capacities in this regard,

Expressing its deep concern at the increasing challenges to Member States and to the United Nations humanitarian response capacity to deal with the consequences of natural disasters, given the effects of global challenges, including the impact of climate change, the ongoing adverse impact of the global financial and economic crisis and the negative impact of volatile food prices on food security and nutrition, and other key factors that exacerbate the vulnerability of populations and exposure to natural hazards and the impact of natural disasters,

Expressing its deep concern also that rural and urban poor communities in the developing world are the hardest hit by the effects of increased disaster risk,

Acknowledging the impacts of rapid urbanization in the context of natural disasters and that urban disaster preparedness and responses require appropriate disaster risk reduction strategies, including in urban planning, and early recovery strategies implemented from the initial stage of relief operations, as well as mitigation, rehabilitation and sustainable development strategies,

Noting that local communities are the first responders in most disasters, underlining the critical role played by in-country capacities in disaster risk reduction, including preparedness, as well as response and recovery, and acknowledging the need to support efforts of Member States to develop and enhance national and local capacities which are fundamental to improving the overall delivery of humanitarian assistance,

Recognizing the high numbers of persons affected by natural disasters, including in this respect internally displaced persons, and the need to address the humanitarian and development needs arising from internal displacement throughout the world owing to natural disasters, and encouraging all relevant actors to consider making use of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement[4] when dealing with situations of internal displacement,

Reaffirming the importance of international cooperation in support of the efforts of the affected States in dealing with natural disasters in all their phases, in particular in preparedness, response and the early recovery phase, and of strengthening the response capacity of countries affected by disaster,

[4] E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2, annex.

Recognizing the progress made by the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) in its mission, encouraging Member States to provide all support necessary, on a voluntary basis, to UN-SPIDER, including financial support, to enable it to carry out its workplan for 2014–2015, and reiterating the importance of enhancing international coordination and cooperation at the global level in disaster management and emergency response through greater access to and use of space-based services for all countries and by facilitating capacity-building and institutional strengthening for disaster management, in particular in developing countries,

Noting the progress in the establishment of the Global Framework for Climate Services to develop and provide science-based climate information and prediction for climate risk management and for adaptation to climate variability and change, and looking forward to its implementation,

Welcoming the important role played by Member States, including developing countries, that have granted necessary and continued generous assistance to countries and peoples stricken by natural disasters,

Recognizing the significant role played by national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, as part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in disaster preparedness and risk reduction, disaster response, rehabilitation and development,

Emphasizing the need to address vulnerability and to integrate disaster risk reduction, including preparedness, into all phases of natural disaster management, post-natural disaster recovery and development planning, through close collaboration of all relevant actors and sectors,

Reaffirming that strengthening resilience contributes to withstanding, adapting to and quickly recovering from disasters,

Recognizing that efforts to achieve economic growth, sustainable development and internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, can be adversely affected by natural disasters, and noting the positive contribution that those efforts can make in strengthening the resilience of populations to such disasters,

Recognizing also the clear relationship between emergency response, rehabilitation and development, and reaffirming that, in order to ensure a smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation and development, emergency assistance must be provided in ways that will be supportive of short- and medium-term recovery leading to long-term development and that certain emergency measures should be seen as a step towards sustainable development,

Emphasizing, in this context, the important role of development organizations and other relevant stakeholders in supporting national efforts to mitigate the consequences of natural disasters,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[5]

2. *Expresses its deep concern* at the increasing impact of natural disasters, resulting in massive losses of life and property worldwide, in particular in

[5] A/68/89.

vulnerable societies lacking adequate capacity to mitigate effectively the long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences of natural disasters;

3. *Calls upon* Member States, the United Nations system and other relevant humanitarian and development actors to accelerate the full implementation of the Hyogo Declaration[1] and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters,[2] in particular those commitments related to assistance for developing countries that are prone to natural disasters and for disaster-stricken States in the transition phase towards sustainable physical, social and economic recovery, for risk-reduction activities in post-disaster recovery and for rehabilitation processes;

4. *Emphasizes* the need to promote and strengthen disaster preparedness activities at all levels, in particular in hazard-prone areas, and encourages Member States, the United Nations system and other relevant humanitarian and development actors to increase funding and cooperation for disaster risk reduction activities, including disaster preparedness;

5. *Encourages* Member States to provide dedicated financial contributions to preparedness, response and recovery efforts in a harmonized, flexible and complementary approach that fully utilizes and helps to coordinate humanitarian and development funding options and potential;

6. *Calls upon* all States to adopt, where required, and to continue to implement effectively, necessary legislative and other appropriate measures to mitigate the effects of natural disasters and integrate disaster risk reduction strategies into development planning, as well as to incorporate a gender perspective into policies, planning and funding, and in this regard requests the international community to continue to assist developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition, as appropriate;

7. *Acknowledges* that climate change, among other factors, contributes to environmental degradation and to the increase in the intensity and frequency of climate and extreme weather events, both of which amplify disaster risk, and in this regard encourages Member States, as well as relevant international, regional and subregional organizations, in accordance with their specific mandates, to support adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change and to strengthen disaster risk reduction and early warning systems in order to minimize the humanitarian consequences of natural disasters, including through the provision of technology and support for capacity-building in developing countries;

8. *Welcomes* the growing number of initiatives undertaken at the regional and national levels to promote the implementation of the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance, encourages Member States and, where applicable, regional organizations to take further steps to review and strengthen operational and legal frameworks for international disaster relief, taking into account the Guidelines, as appropriate, and welcomes the recent efforts of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat and the Inter-Parliamentary Union to develop a model act on the subject;

9. *Also welcomes* the effective cooperation among the affected States, relevant bodies of the United Nations system, donor countries, regional and international financial institutions and other relevant organizations, such as the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and civil society, in the

coordination and delivery of emergency relief, and stresses the need to continue such cooperation and delivery throughout relief operations and medium- and long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, in a manner that reduces vulnerability to future natural hazards;

10. *Reiterates* the commitment to support, as a matter of priority, the efforts of countries, in particular developing countries, to strengthen their capacities at all levels in order to reduce risks, prepare for and respond rapidly to natural disasters and mitigate their impact;

11. *Urges* Member States to develop, update and strengthen early warning systems, disaster preparedness and risk reduction measures at all levels, in accordance with the Hyogo Framework for Action, taking into account their own circumstances and capacities and in coordination with relevant actors, as appropriate, and encourages the international community and relevant United Nations entities to continue to support national efforts in this regard;

12. *Also urges* Member States to improve their response to early warning information in order to ensure that early warning leads to early action, and encourages all stakeholders to support the efforts of Member States in this regard;

13. *Encourages* Member States to consider elaborating and presenting to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction secretariat their national platforms for disaster reduction in accordance with the Hyogo Framework for Action, and also encourages States to cooperate with each other to reach this objective;

14. *Recognizes* the importance of applying a multi-hazard approach to preparedness, and encourages Member States, taking into account their specific circumstances, and the United Nations system to continue to apply the approach to their preparedness activities, including by giving due regard to, inter alia, secondary environmental hazards stemming from industrial and technological accidents;

15. *Stresses* that, to increase further the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance, particular international cooperation efforts should be undertaken to enhance and broaden further the utilization of national and local capacities and, where appropriate, of regional and subregional capacities for disaster preparedness and response, which may be made available in closer proximity to the site of a disaster, and more efficiently and at lower cost;

16. *Also stresses*, in this context, the importance of strengthening international cooperation, particularly through the effective use of multilateral mechanisms, in the timely provision of humanitarian assistance through all phases of a disaster, from relief and recovery to development, including the provision of adequate resources;

17. *Encourages* all relevant stakeholders, including Member States, to take appropriate measures to reduce and discourage the sending of unsolicited, unneeded or inappropriate relief goods in response to disasters;

18. *Encourages* all Member States to facilitate, to the extent possible, the transit of emergency humanitarian assistance and development assistance, provided in the context of international efforts, including in the phase from relief to development, in full accordance with the provisions of resolution 46/182 and the annex thereto, and in full respect of the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, and their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law;

19. *Encourages* Member States to put in place, as appropriate, customs measures to improve effectiveness in responding to natural disasters;

20. *Reaffirms* the leading role of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs as the focal point within the overall United Nations system for advocacy for and coordination of humanitarian assistance among United Nations humanitarian organizations and other humanitarian partners;

21. *Welcomes* the important contribution of the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination system to the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance in supporting Member States, upon their request, and the United Nations system in preparedness and humanitarian response, and encourages the continued incorporation into this mechanism of experts from developing countries that are prone to natural disasters;

22. *Also welcomes* the important contribution of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group to the effectiveness of international urban search and rescue assistance, and encourages Member States to continue to support the Advisory Group, in line with General Assembly resolution 57/150 of 16 December 2002;

23. *Urges* Member States, the United Nations system and other humanitarian actors to consider the specific and differentiated consequences of natural disasters both in rural and urban areas when designing and implementing disaster risk reduction, prevention and mitigation, preparedness, humanitarian assistance and early recovery strategies, giving special emphasis to addressing the needs of those living in rural and urban poor areas prone to natural disasters;

24. *Welcomes* the efforts of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to build partnerships with regional organizations and the private sector, and encourages Member States and the United Nations system to continue to strengthen partnerships at the global, regional, national and local levels in support of national efforts in situations of natural disasters, in order to cooperate effectively in providing humanitarian assistance to those in need and ensure that their collaborative efforts adhere to the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence;

25. *Recognizes* that information and telecommunications technology can play an important role in disaster response, encourages Member States to develop emergency response telecommunications capacities and encourages the international community to assist the efforts of developing countries in this area, where needed, including in the recovery phase, and in this regard encourages Member States that have not acceded to or ratified the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations[6] to consider doing so;

26. *Encourages* the further use of space-based and ground-based remote-sensing technologies, including as provided by the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER), as well as the sharing of geographical data, for the prevention, mitigation and management of natural disasters, where appropriate, and invites Member States to continue to provide their support to the consolidation of the United Nations capability in the area of satellite-derived geographical information for early warning, preparedness, response and early recovery;

[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2296, No. 40906.

27. *Recognizes* the opportunities for new technologies, when utilized in a coordinated fashion and based on humanitarian principles, potentially to improve the effectiveness and accountability of humanitarian response, and encourages Member States, the United Nations and its humanitarian partners to consider engaging, inter alia, with the volunteer and technical communities in order to make use of the variety of data and information available during emergencies and disaster risk efforts;

28. *Encourages* Member States, relevant United Nations organizations and international financial institutions to enhance the global capacity for sustainable post-disaster recovery in areas such as coordination with traditional and non-traditional partners, identification and dissemination of lessons learned, development of common tools and mechanisms for recovery needs assessment, strategy development and programming, and incorporation of risk reduction into all recovery processes, and welcomes the ongoing efforts to this end;

29. *Encourages* Member States and the United Nations system to support national initiatives that address the differentiated impacts of natural disasters on the affected population, including through the collection and analysis of data disaggregated, inter alia, by sex, age and disability, using, inter alia, the existing information provided by States, and through the development of tools, methods and procedures that will result in more timely and useful initial needs assessments that lead to targeted and more effective assistance;

30. *Calls upon* United Nations humanitarian organizations, in consultation with Member States, as appropriate, to strengthen the evidence base for effective humanitarian assistance by further developing common mechanisms to improve the quality, transparency and reliability of, and make further progress towards, common humanitarian needs assessments, to assess their performance in assistance and to ensure the most effective use of humanitarian resources by these organizations;

31. *Encourages* Member States to take steps to develop or to improve data collection and analysis and to facilitate the exchange of information with humanitarian organizations of the United Nations, in order to support preparedness efforts and to improve the effectiveness of a needs-based humanitarian response, and encourages the United Nations system, as appropriate, and other relevant actors to continue to assist developing countries in their efforts to build local and national capacities for data collection and analysis;

32. *Encourages* Member States, regional organizations, the United Nations and humanitarian and development organizations to continue to improve the identification, mapping and analysis of risks and vulnerabilities, including the local impact of future disaster risk drivers, and the development and implementation of appropriate strategies and programmes to address them, and in this regard encourages all the relevant stakeholders to support Governments in capacity development, including at the regional and local levels, through the sharing of expertise and tools and the provision of necessary resources, as appropriate, to ensure that effective disaster management plans and capacities are in place in accordance with national priorities for disaster risk management;

33. *Stresses* the importance of the full and equal participation of women in decision-making and of gender mainstreaming in developing and implementing disaster risk reduction, preparedness, response and recovery strategies, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to continue ensuring that gender mainstreaming is better taken into account in all aspects of humanitarian responses and activities;

34. *Encourages* Governments, local authorities, the United Nations system and regional organizations, and invites donors and other assisting countries, to address the vulnerabilities and capacities of women and girls through gender-responsive programming, including means to address sexual and gender-based violence and various forms of exploitation in post-disaster environments, and the allocation of resources in their disaster risk reduction, response and recovery efforts in coordination with the Governments of affected countries;

35. *Encourages* Member States and relevant regional and international organizations to identify and improve the dissemination of best practices for improving disaster preparedness, response and early recovery and to scale up successful local initiatives, as appropriate;

36. *Requests* the United Nations humanitarian and development organizations to improve their coordination of disaster recovery efforts, from relief to development, inter alia, by strengthening institutional, coordination and strategic planning efforts in disaster preparedness, resilience-building and recovery, in support of national authorities, and by ensuring that development actors participate in strategic planning at an early stage;

37. *Encourages* the United Nations and humanitarian and development organizations to support national, subnational and local governments and communities in their responsibility to develop long-term strategies and multi-year operational plans for preparedness that are embedded within disaster risk reduction and resilience strategies in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action;

38. *Calls upon* the United Nations system and other humanitarian actors to improve the dissemination of tools and services to support enhanced disaster risk reduction, in particular preparedness, and early recovery;

39. *Calls upon* relevant United Nations humanitarian and development organizations, in consultation with Member States, to strengthen tools and mechanisms to ensure that early recovery needs and support are integrated into the planning and implementation of disaster preparedness, humanitarian response and development cooperation activities, as appropriate;

40. *Encourages* the United Nations system and humanitarian organizations to continue their efforts to mainstream early recovery into humanitarian programming, acknowledges that early recovery is an important step towards resilience-building and should receive further funding, and encourages the provision of timely, flexible and predictable funding for early recovery, including through established and complementary humanitarian and development instruments;

41. *Stresses* the need to strengthen resilience at all levels, and in this regard encourages Member States, the United Nations system and other relevant actors to support efforts, as appropriate, to integrate resilience in humanitarian and development programming;

42. *Encourages* the United Nations system and other relevant humanitarian and development actors to support humanitarian coordinators and resident coordinators, in order to strengthen their capacity, inter alia, to support the host Government in implementing preparedness measures and to coordinate preparedness activities of country teams in support of national efforts, and encourages the United Nations system and other relevant humanitarian actors to further strengthen the ability to quickly and flexibly deploy humanitarian professionals to support Governments and country teams in the immediate aftermath of a disaster;

43. *Emphasizes* the need to mobilize adequate, flexible and sustainable resources for recovery, preparedness and disaster risk reduction activities in order to ensure predictable and timely access to resources for humanitarian assistance in emergencies resulting from disasters associated with natural hazards;

44. *Welcomes* the achievements of the Central Emergency Response Fund and its contribution to the promotion and enhancement of early humanitarian response, calls upon all Member States, and invites the private sector and all concerned individuals and institutions, to consider increasing voluntary contributions to the Fund, including, when possible, through multi-year and early commitments, and emphasizes that contributions should be additional to current commitments to humanitarian programming and not to the detriment of resources made available for international cooperation for development;

45. *Strongly encourages* giving appropriate consideration to disaster risk reduction and the building of resilience to disasters within the post-2015 development agenda and promoting a complementary and coherent approach between that agenda and the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction;

46. *Invites* Member States, the private sector and all concerned individuals and institutions to consider voluntary contributions to other humanitarian funding mechanisms;

47. *Welcomes* the initiative of the Secretary-General to hold the first World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2016, aimed at sharing knowledge and best practices in the humanitarian field to improve the coordination, capacity and effectiveness of humanitarian response, and requests the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to ensure an inclusive, consultative transparent preparatory process;

48. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to improve the international response to natural disasters and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session and to include in his report recommendations on how to ensure that humanitarian assistance is provided in ways supportive of the transition from relief to development.

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